



The North Carolina State Bar

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PRESS RELEASE

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N.C. STATE BAR STATEMENT ON DISCIPLINARY ACTION AGAINST MICHAEL NIFONG

Steven D. Michael, the president of the N.C. State Bar, issued the following statement on the Disciplinary Hearing Commission's action today disbaring Michael B. Nifong, the former prosecutor in the Duke lacrosse case, for violations of the State Bar's Rules of Professional Conduct:

"I am satisfied that justice was done in the Nifong case and am proud to say that our system of self-regulation worked well. Mr. Nifong received a fair trial. All interested parties – but especially the citizens of North Carolina – were finally able to see all the evidence relating to this extremely unfortunate case of professional misconduct.

"I was very impressed with the effective and thoroughly professional presentation made by the State Bar's lawyers, Katherine Jean, Doug Brocker and Carmen Hoyme. I also thought Mr. Nifong was well represented.

"The members of the DHC's Hearing Committee deserve thanks and commendation as well. They presided over a very difficult case in a fair and extremely competent fashion.

"In my experience, misconduct of the sort Mr. Nifong engaged in is very rare and not at all typical of prosecutors in our state. We deeply regret the serious harm caused to these young men and their families. We hope the decision today will lessen the likelihood that anything like this will happen again.

"The Bar's strong response to this situation made clear that the ethical rules restricting pre-trial public comment and requiring prosecutors to turn over exculpatory evidence will be strictly enforced. Those rules are important because they ensure the fundamental right to a fair trial that every citizen is guaranteed in our constitution."